



NEWS

Federal Communications Commission
418 Market Street
Washington, D.C. 20554

This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action. See MCI v. FCC, 515 F 2d 385 (D.C. Circ 1974).

Report No. IN 98-50 INTERNATIONAL ACTION September 3, 1998

THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA AGREE ON CONDITIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF U.S. SATELLITE DIGITAL AUDIO RADIO SERVICES (DARS) AND CANADIAN TERRESTRIAL DIGITAL RADIO BROADCAST SERVICES (T-DRB) ALONG THE U.S./CANADA BORDER AREA

The United States and Canada have agreed on technical conditions for implementation of Terrestrial Digital Radio Broadcasting (T-DRB) services in Canada in the 1452-1492 MHz band and Satellite Digital Audio Radio Services (DARS) in the United States in the 2320-2345 MHz band. As a result, T-DRB service can be implemented immediately, and the launch of DARS can occur after a transition period. Coordination discussions regarding DARS are continuing with countries other than Canada.

These agreed upon conditions are the result of negotiations that took place over several years and involved complex inter-service frequency sharing considerations unique to the U.S. and Canada in these two bands. Although these bands are used for different services in Canada and the U.S., new applications of digital technology will be introduced by Canadian and U.S. providers. It is important to note that the continued operation of U.S. aeronautical telemetry stations was a paramount concern in these discussions. Looking to the future, FCC Chairman William E. Kennard, stated, "This successful negotiation will provide U.S. consumers access to innovative CD quality audio programming and will promote new communications services using innovative satellite-delivered digital technologies."

U.S. Ambassador Vonya McCann and Canadian Assistant Deputy Minister Michael Binder exchanged letters that will allow both countries to begin to implement by September 1, 1998 the technical conditions for the introduction of these new digital sound broadcasting services on either side of the border. Both the United States and Canada have pledged to work swiftly to convert these technical conditions into binding international agreements.

In the interim both countries will implement these mutually agreeable conditions on an interim basis, beginning on September 1, 1998. Details of the conditions are available on the FCC internet site for the International Bureau (<http://www.fcc.gov/ib>).

For further information, contact Ronald Repasi, (202) 418-0768, Rosalee Chiara (202) 418-0754 or Larry Olson at (202) 418-2142, of the International Bureau.